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WHA Press Guidance
December 10, 2001

VENEZUELA: GENERAL WORK STOPPAGE

Question: Do you have any comment on today's general work stoppage in Venezuela?

A: WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE GENERAL WORK STOPPAGE CALLED FOR BY THE VENEZUELAN FEDERATION OF CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE (FEDECAMARAS) IS BEING FOLLOWED WIDELY. FEDECAMARAS CALLED FOR THIS WORK STOPPAGE TO PROTEST THE RECENT ENACTMENT BY PRESIDENT CHAVEZ OF SEVERAL LAWS. THE VENEZUELAN CONFEDERATION OF WORKERS (CTV) IS SUPPORTING THE WORK STOPPAGE.

THE GENERAL STRIKE IS AN INTERNAL DOMESTIC MATTER, AND IT WOULD NOT BE APPROPRIATE FOR ME TO COMMENT. THIS GENERAL WORK STOPPAGE IS PART OF A LARGER DEMOCRATIC DIALOGUE. THE U.S. WILL CONTINUE TO OBSERVE CLOSELY DEVELOPMENTS IN VENEZUELA.

WE ISSUED A PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT FOR VENEZUELA ON DECEMBER 3RD TO INFORM U.S. CITIZENS IN VENEZUELA, AS WELL AS THOSE WHO MAY BE CONSIDERING TRAVEL TO THAT COUNTRY IN THE COMING WEEKS, ABOUT THE SITUATION.